



October 20, 2006

FCC Commissioners

Re: WC Docket No. 06-74, Support for AT&T BellSouth Merger

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing to urge expeditious approval of the BellSouth / AT&T merger. As Director of the Cullman Economic Development Agency, I know first hand the issues impeding economic growth in rural areas of our State. This merger will address one of the most critical needs required of any community seeking to grow its economy and new jobs – affordable and universal broadband Internet access.

The proposed AT&T / BellSouth merger could be the catalyst for dynamic economic change in our rural communities, especially. As a proposed condition of the merger, AT&T and BellSouth have committed to deliver *affordable* and *universal* access to broadband, including:

- ☑ A new residential broadband offering at \$10 per month, affording many rural communities a viable alternative to dial access;
- ☑ A pledge to provide broadband Internet access to *all* residential living units in the AT&T / BellSouth service area, providing rural economic developers a necessary tool to recruit new economic development prospects to our rural communities.

The merger of these great American companies will significantly enhance the economic viability of the communities we serve. I ask you to approve the AT&T / BellSouth merger without further delay.

Sincerely,

s/s Peggy S. Smith

Peggy S. Smith
Director
Cullman Economic Development Agency
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